



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

72-HOUR REPORT

8 NOVEMBER 2021

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Los Angeles – Jetpack Man Over Los Angeles may be Balloons, FBI Says

(U) Authorities investigating a series of possible jetpack sightings over Los Angeles by pilots believe they may have identified an explanation for the mysterious reports. "One working theory is that pilots might have seen balloons," the FBI and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said in statements, after police video and photos appear to show a human-shaped inflatable toy floating thousands of feet above Beverly Hills. While officials noted that the police encounter could have been a single balloon that broke loose from a Halloween display, it also reinforced the theory that pilots might have seen human-shaped inflatables or other balloons that had drifted into the landing approach routes into Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

SOURCE: 2 November 2021, [NBC Los Angeles](#)

(U) Milpitas – No Indication of Gunfire Following Report of 'Active Situation' at Great Mall

(U) Police in Northern California responded to a shopping mall Friday night amid reports of an active shooter, but no evidence was found of shots fired, authorities said. The Milpitas Police Department said officers responded to the Great Mall just after 5:30 pm for reports of an altercation involving a knife. Shortly after, a shooting was reported inside a Burlington Coat Factory store. Several law enforcement agencies responded to the scene and assisted with a search of the mall. Shoppers and store employees sheltered in place and were escorted outside, police said. Officers checked the store and there was no indication that a shooting took place and no victims related to the initial call have been found, the department said.

SOURCE: 6 November 2021, [CBS SF Bay Area](#)

(U) Oakland – Toddler Killed by Stray Bullet in Oakland Highway Shooting

(U) A toddler was killed Saturday afternoon after being struck by a stray bullet on a highway in Oakland, officials said. Shortly after 2 pm, a white Lexus was traveling southbound on Interstate 880, when the car was suddenly hit by gunfire, according to the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The victim, Jasper Wu, 23 months, was rushed to the Oakland Children's Hospital, where he later died, officials said. Officials believe the family was not the intended target. The investigation is ongoing.

SOURCE: 6 November 2021, [NBC News](#)

(U) Palo Alto – Hackers Breached Defense and other Sensitive Sectors, Security Firm Says

(U) Suspected foreign hackers have breached nine organizations in the defense, energy, health care, technology, and education sectors, including at least one US organization, according to findings from security firm Palo Alto Networks. Hackers stole passwords from some targeted organizations with the goal of maintaining long-term access to those networks. The intruders could be well placed to intercept sensitive data sent over email or stored on computer systems until they are kicked out of the network. It's unclear who is responsible for the activity, but Palo Alto Networks said some of the attackers' tactics and tools overlap with those used by a suspected Chinese hacking group.

SOURCE: 8 November 2021, [CNN](#)

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(U) SOUTHWEST BORDER

(U) Arizona – Troopers Seize \$1.7M in Fentanyl, Other Illegal Drugs after I-10 Traffic Stop

(U) Tucson – Arizona Department of Public Safety troopers seized \$1.7 million in fentanyl, heroin, methamphetamine, and more after a traffic stop northwest of Tucson. Officers pulled over a pickup truck on Interstate 10 on 4 November and discovered more than 34-pounds of fentanyl pills inside of the vehicle. Mario Quinonez Osuna, 30, from California, was arrested for transporting narcotic drugs for sale. This arrest led to a search warrant on another second truck where troopers also found 37-pounds of blue fentanyl pills, along with 8-pounds of meth, 7-pounds of heroin, and nearly 5-pounds of an unidentified substance. A second suspect identified as Kevin Valdez, 27, from New River, was arrested for drug transportation charges.

SOURCE: 6 November 2021, [Fox 10 Phoenix](#)

(U) Arizona – High-Ranking Members of the Sinaloa Cartel Charged with International Drug Trafficking

(U) Tucson – The US Attorney's office in Arizona announced the unsealing of two indictments that charged high-ranking members of the Sinaloa drug cartel with international drug trafficking, one of them the brother of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the convicted former leader of the cartel. A federal grand jury in Tucson returned superseding indictments in November 2019 and February 2020 against cartel members Aureliano Guzman-Loera of Sinaloa, Mexico, along with brothers Ruperto, Jose, and Heriberto Salgueiro-Nevarez of Guadalupe Y Calvo, Mexico, according to a press release from the US Attorney's office. The indictments allege various violations of US law related to the international distribution of controlled substances, including fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana, occurring over several years.

SOURCE: 5 November 2021, [US DOJ](#)

(U) California – Suspected Smuggling Boat Abandoned on La Jolla Beach

(U) San Diego – Approximately 20 people believed to be undocumented migrants evaded authorities Friday morning after their boat landed on a La Jolla beach, U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) officials said. The boat landed around 10:50 am at Marine Street Beach according to a USBP statement. About 20 people reportedly jumped off the boat. USBP agents found eight flotation vests near the abandoned craft but did not detain anyone. USBP is investigating the incident, while personnel from Customs and Border Protections' Air and Marine Operations seized the boat.

SOURCE: 5 November 2021, [The San Diego Union Tribune](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) District of Columbia – US Seizes \$6 Million in Ransom Payments, Indictments Pending

(U) Washington – The US Justice Department is expected to announce charges against Yaroslav Vasinskyi, a Ukrainian national who was arrested in Poland last month for deploying ransomware known as REvil, which has been used in hacks that have cost US firms millions-of-dollars. Vasinskyi conducted a ransomware attack over the Fourth of July weekend on Florida-based software firm Kaseya that infected up to 1,500 businesses around the world. Vasinskyi and another alleged REvil operative, Russian national Yevgeniy Polyanin, are expected to be charged with conspiracy to commit fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering, among other charges. As part of the investigation, authorities seized at least \$6 million in funds allegedly linked to ransom payments received by Polyanin. Vasinskyi, 22, is being held in Poland pending US extradition proceedings, while Polyanin, 28, remains at large.

SOURCE: 8 November 2021, [CNN](#)

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(U) Ohio – Chinese Intelligence Officer Convicted of Espionage, Attempting to Steal Trade Secrets

(U) Cincinnati – A federal jury convicted Yanjun Xu, a Chinese national and Deputy Division Director of the Sixth Bureau of the Jiangsu Province Ministry of State Security (MSS), of conspiring to and attempting to commit economic espionage and theft of trade secrets. From at least December 2013, Xu used multiple aliases to target specific aviation companies in the US and abroad. He identified experts who worked for the companies and recruited them to travel to China, often under the guise of giving a presentation at a university. Xu and others paid the experts stipends on top of covering travel costs. According to the conviction, Xu attempted to steal technology related to GE Aviation's exclusive composite aircraft engine fan to benefit the Chinese state. The defendant is the first Chinese intelligence officer to be extradited to the United States to stand trial.

SOURCE: 5 November 2021, [US DOJ](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Ethiopia – US Orders Non-Emergency Government Employees in Ethiopia to Leave

(U) Addis Ababa – The US has ordered non-emergency government employees in Ethiopia to leave because of armed conflicts and civil unrest. A statement by the US Embassy in Addis Ababa said, "the situation may escalate further and may cause supply chain shortages, communications blackouts, and travel disruptions." Denmark and Italy also asked their citizens in Ethiopia to leave while commercial flights were still available, as rebellious Tigrayan forces and their allies have advanced towards the capital Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian government declared a national state of emergency on Tuesday, saying it was locked in an "existential war" with forces from the northern Tigray region and their allies.

SOURCE: 6 November 2021, [Reuters](#)

(U) France – Police Officer Survives Knife Attack in French Riviera City of Cannes

(U) Cannes – A police officer was wounded on Monday after a man claiming to act "in the name of the prophet" attacked him in the southern city of Cannes, police said. The police are treating the incident as a possible terrorist attack. The officer attacked was behind the wheel of a car in front of a police station at 6:30 am when the attacker opened the door and stabbed him with a knife. The officer was saved thanks to his bullet-proof vest. The attacker then tried to stab a second officer in the car before being shot by a third officer and is now in serious condition. The assailant was an Algerian national who held an Italian residency permit, was in France legally, and was not on a French watchlist of individuals thought to have Islamist sympathies.

SOURCE: 8 November 2021, [Reuters](#)

(U) Iraq – Prime Minister Survives Exploding Drone Assassination Attempt

(U) Baghdad – Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi survived an assassination attempt with armed drones that targeted his residence early Sunday and officials said he was unharmed. Iraqi officials reported that seven of al-Kadhimi's security guards were injured in the attack with two armed drones which occurred in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone area. The attack was a major escalation amid tensions sparked by the refusal of Iran-backed militias to accept last month's parliamentary election results. The statement released by state-run media said security forces were "taking the necessary measures in connection with this failed attempt." There was no immediate claim for the attack.

SOURCE: 7 November 2021, [Associated Press](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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